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Kipling, Rudyard  
The absent-minded beggar

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*A. J. Wilgus*  
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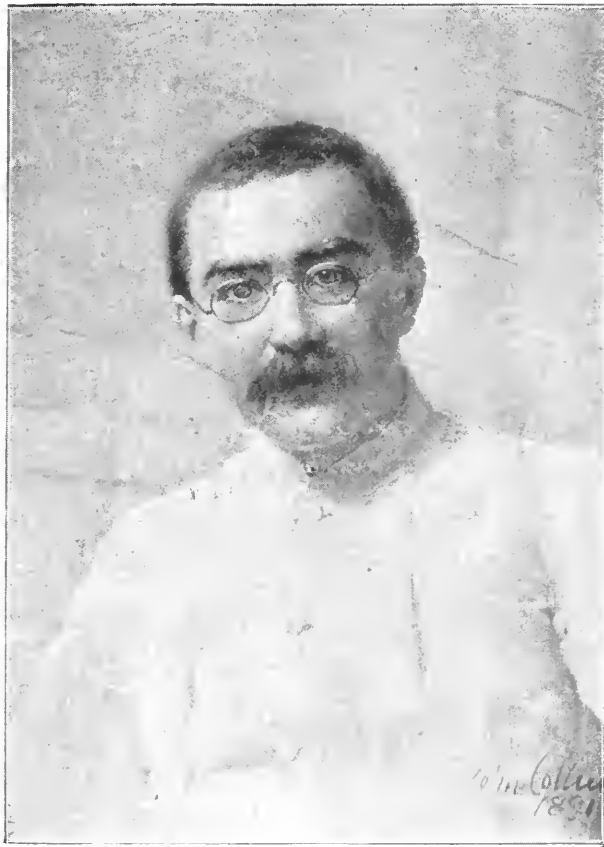


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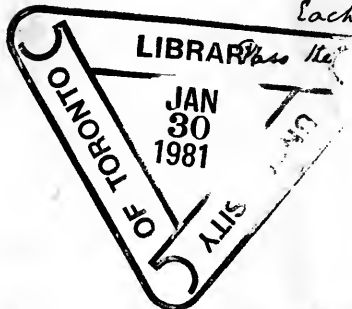


RUDYARD  
KIPLING.

# The Absent-minded Beggar

## I.

When you've shouted "Rule Britannia" - when you've sung "God Save The Queen" -  
When you've finished killing Kruger with your mouth -  
Will you kindly drop a shilling in my little tambourine  
For a gentleman in Kharki ordered South?  
He's an absent-minded beggar and his weaknesses are great -  
But we and Paul must take him as we find him -  
He is out on active service, wiping something off a slate -  
And he's left a lot o' little things behind him!  
Duke's son - Cook's son - Son of a hundred Kings -  
(Fifty thousand horse and foot going to Table Bay!)  
Each of 'em doing his country's work (and who's to look after their things?)  
Pass the hat for your credit's sake, and pay - pay - pay!



## II.

Here are girls he married secret, asking no permission to,  
For he knew he wouldn't get it if he did.  
There is gas and coals and nittles and the house rent falling due  
And it's more than rather lately there's a kid  
There are girls he walked with casual they'll be sorry now he's gone,  
For an absent-minded beggar they will find him,  
But it ain't the time for sermons with the winter coming on -  
We must help the girl that Tommy's left behind him!  
Cook's son - Duke's son - Son of a belted Earl -  
Son of a dambest publican - it's all the same today!  
Each of 'em doing his country's work, (and who's to look after the girl?)  
Pass the hat for your credit's sake, and pay - pay - pay!

**T**HE WHOLE PROCEEDS FROM THE SALE OF THIS POEM  
WILL BE DEVOTED BY THE "DAILY MAIL"  
IN THE NAME OF RUDYARD KIPLING,  
TO THE BENEFIT OF THE  
WIVES AND CHILDREN OF THE RESERVISTS.



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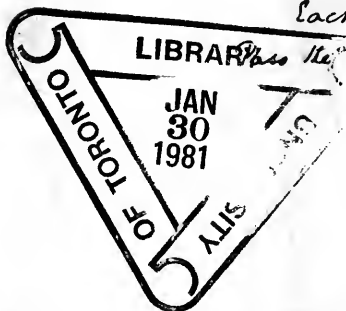
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Duke's son - Cook's son - Son of a hundred Kings -  
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Each of 'em doing his country's work, (and who's to look after the girl?)  
Pass the hat for your credit's sake, and pay - pay - pay!



"A gentleman in kharki."

### III.

Here are families by thousands, far too proud to beg or speak —  
 And they'll put their sticks and bedding up the spout,  
 And they'll live on half o' nothing paid 'em punctual once a week.

Cause the man that earned the wage is ordered out.  
 He's an absent-minded beggar, but he heard his country call,  
 And his reg'ment didn't need to send to find him:  
 He chucked his job and joined it — So the job before us all  
 Is to keep the home that Tommy's left behind him!

Cook's job — Cook's job — gardener, baronet, groom —  
 News or palace or paper-shop — there's some one gone away!  
 Each of 'em doing his country's work (and who's to look after the room?)  
 Pass the hat for your credit's sake and — pay! pay! pay!

### IV.

Let us manage so as later we can look 'em in the face,  
 And tell him — what he'd very much prefer —

That, while he saved the Empire his employer saved his place,  
 And his mates (that's you and me) looked out for her.  
 He's an absent-minded beggar, and he may forget it all;

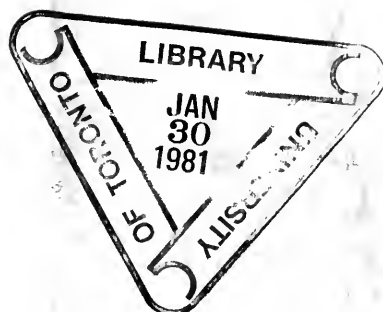
But we do not want his kiddies to remind him  
 That we sent 'em to the workhouse while their daddy hammered Paul  
 So we'll keep the homes — our Tommy's left behind him!

Cook's home — Duke's home — home of a millionaire.  
 (Fifty thousand horse and foot going to Table Bay!)  
 Each of 'em doing his country's work (and what have you got to spare?)  
 Pass the hat for your credit's sake and — pay! pay! pay!

Rudyard Kipling







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